

from these countries. Even people illegally getting into Puerto Rico then board a plane anywhere in the United States with some fake document that is mistaken for a valid American identification.

We have 22 border patrol agents in Puerto Rico, but only four of them are on duty at any one given time. They are doing the best they can, but they need help.

The border war must be won. We do it by first requiring all people in the Western Hemisphere to have a passport to get into the United States legally. Our 9/11 Commission recommends it. It is a national security issue of the United States. And then we give the resources to our border agents to make sure they can keep people from landing on our beaches and invading our country. It is a border security issue. We must win the war on this second front and prevent the unlawful invasion into America. Keep these landing craft from invading our beaches.

Mr. Speaker, lawlessness on our border breeds more lawlessness in the heartland of America.

Mr. Speaker, that is today's news from the front.

And that's just the way it is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCHIFF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE WAR IN IRAQ

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from New Mexico is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, over 3 years our Nation has invested in Iraq. In human and political costs it has been a heavy toll. We have lost thousands of American and Iraqi lives, spent billions of dollars, and squandered the greatest outpouring of international support in decades. And through it all, we have misplaced our focus on the threat of Islamic terrorism.

It is time for us to prepare to redeploy our forces from Iraq by the end of the year. Mr. MURTHA is right: redeploy but be ready. Some successes have occurred.

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The recent killing of Islamic extremist al Zargawi by coalition forces offers an opportunity to stem the steady tide of internal terrorist attacks in Iraq, while the welcome news that several important cabinet ministers have been appointed demonstrates that progress is being made. Nevertheless, these glimpses of optimism cannot mask the

overwhelming recognition that this was a war of choice. The administration invaded Iraq without the necessary international support and without plans for stability, reconstruction, and governance.

Earlier this year I visited Iraq and saw firsthand the reality of our investment. While our troops bravely fight, there were few areas of security or safety. Sectarian violence and civil strife have eclipsed the progress of free elections. Unemployment continues unabated. Radical clerics promote hate, and anti-American sentiment has spread with fervor. At the same time the President is urging that we stay the course, we are approaching 2,500 American troops killed, and more and more we are learning the costs back home, families losing loved ones and soldiers physically and mentally scarred by war.

We have helped sow the seeds of democracy, but now the people of Iraq must take charge and bring about their own destiny. We cannot force our way of life or our ideals upon another nation, nor should that ever be our mission. Rather, we must encourage them to bring about their own change and promise that as long as democracy and liberty is their desire, we will be their ally and be devoted to their success. To prolong this transition will only deepen their dependence on our resources, will further radicalize those who use our presence as an enticement for hate, and will distract us away from where our focus must lie.

It was only a few years ago that this Congress, with bipartisanship and unity, supported the President in embarking against the terrorist threat by ousting the Taliban from Afghanistan. All of our allies and some of our enemies recognized the strength of our convictions in defeating those who promote radicalism and extremism, and we were joined by the largest coalition in history. But then we detoured and launched an ill-advised military operation in Iraq. The results have been damaging, and instead of achieving success globally, we have reached and sowed frustration and recalcitrance.

I believe we are seeing ever increasing signs that our resources in Iraq must now be shifted to finish the job in Afghanistan and work with our allies to defeat the terrorist threat around the world. Not because we have failed or succeeded but because the process of democracy is never ending. And it is time for the Iraqi people to stand up and lead the way toward their future. Through redeployment and reallocation, we can provide regional support to those areas most susceptible to terrorism. We can refocus our attention to eradicating the leaders of hate who use global networks to promote radicalism. And we can strengthen our ability to develop multilateral approaches, reinvesting in the idea that key alliances is the best way in which to bring about democracy and stability throughout the world.

There are some who will argue that patriotism and criticism are mutually exclusive. This is utterly false. Our strength of promoting democracy, liberty, and freedom must be coupled with the wisdom of recognizing our fallibility. The difference between those who believe we must stay the course in Iraq and those who believe we must change course lies not in degrees of patriotism but rather in truthful disagreement over policy. Confusing the two leads only to division and partisanship, and we must avoid at all costs to allow an issue of such importance to be clouded with such rhetoric.

Mr. Speaker, I was against our Nation going to war in Iraq, but at every step of the way I have supported our men and women in uniform in their mission. I have objected to the heavy-handed foreign policy of this administration but have desired to see hope and progress for the Iraqi people. And now I call for our troops in Iraq to be redeployed by the end of the year.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHENRY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. STUPAK addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. ROSS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CUMMINGS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCOTT of Virginia addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE 30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to come before the House once again, the 30-something Working Group. I would like to thank the Democratic leader, NANCY PELOSI, and also Mr. STENY HOYER, who is our whip; Mr. JAMES CLYBURN, our chairman; and also Mr. LARSON, who is our vice chairman.

And I think that it is very appropriate at this particular time, Mr. Speaker, to talk about the great comeback by the Miami Heat in the series of the NBA finals. And I can say on behalf of Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and those of us from the south Florida delegation and from the Florida delegation that we are very, very pleased of the outstanding play by the Heat. We want to continue to support them in every way possible. We know that they will be victorious. We have been wrestling with our friends in the back in the Speaker's lobby from Dallas and the surrounding area, letting them know that the final outcome will be a great parade in downtown Miami with the new NBA champions. As you know, as we look at it from a religious standpoint, you have to claim it. And we are excited.

There are some extraordinary things that are happening now. Dwyane Wade. If Shaquille O'Neal falls on a Chevy truck, he would hurt it. But Dwyane Wade has been able to overcome the injury, and also several of the Heat players and the Heat fans have persevered. So we look forward to Father's Day. I know that Shaquille O'Neal and Alonzo Mourning and Dwyane Wade are all fathers, and we know on Father's Day they will deliver a gift to themselves and to me and to other folks.

So I just want to say since we have the hour, Mr. Speaker, there are Members, I am pretty sure, from Texas, from Dallas who would love to come to the floor, whom we will not yield to at this time, to give their side of the story.

We are happy we have this hour. We honor the Heat and we are glad that there is a great series going on. And while we are at it, before I yield to Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ to make comments on this, I want to thank the NBA for all the work that they have done not only in Dallas but in Miami, in their charities, and giving to the Heat center. At Little River Middle School, they have actually put some computers in, and they have been there over the years, but they have made a new commitment to that center and they have named it after the late wife of the Heat trainer. So we want to encourage the NBA to keep doing what they are doing.

I yield to Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you to my good friend from Florida, Mr. MEEK.

We are proud to wear the colors today, Mr. Speaker, and we have got the beads on. And because we could not be with the Heat in south Florida during their triumphant victory last night and the other night, we decided to stir up some spirit here and send some good karma home to them. And I can tell you that I have a little gastronomic wager with our good friend Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Dallas. I am looking forward to enjoying some lunch, courtesy of her and her staff after the Heat grabbed the championship. And hopefully, we will be able to be down there with them on Sunday and take home some of the spirit that we have been able to generate up here.

Thanks to your good leadership and firing up the Heat troops up here. I have worn these beads all over the place the last couple of days and yesterday in the mall, walking with my husband and my kids, got stopped by a tourist up here saying, "Go Heat." So we can feel it all the way up here.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, just as a point of information, as we start working in a bipartisan way towards the spirit of the Miami Heat, and it is bipartisan, we have Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART, LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART, also ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, also JEFF MILLER from the Panhandle of Florida that have joined in in this Heat spirit. On our side we have Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, myself, Congressman ALCEE HASTINGS, and also Mr. ROBERT WEXLER. So I mean it is kind of balanced off as it relates to who has the beads in support of the Miami Heat. We rallied them when they were down by 0-2, and we will continue to rally around them now that it is even.

With that, Mr. Speaker, we would like to go into what we usually do when we come to the floor as it relates to the 30-something Working Group, talking about the issues that we have been meeting on, wanting to bring to the floor and share with the American people and also share with the Members of the House.

We talk about the agenda that was released, "A New Direction for America" by the Democratic Caucus, and not talk about what we may do when we take the majority if the American people find it fit for us to take the majority, but what we will do, and I think it is important to say "will." And I always say we have the will and desire to lead. We have the will and desire to pass legislation. We also have the will and desire, Mr. Speaker, to take the rubber stamp out of the Republican majority's hands and put it in the garbage because that is not what this Congress should be all about. It should be oversight. It should be evaluation of policies that we would like to pass, need it be health care, need it be Iraq policy, need it be economic development. And in our plan, it is important to understand that we want to make

health care more affordable for Americans, make sure that we have a fair share as it relates to prescription drugs on behalf of the American people, making sure that we can move into the area of investing in stem cell research for medical research for some of the cure that we can do now. Also work toward alternative fuels, making this country independent of the Middle East and invest in the Midwest as it relates to E-85, alternative fuels, making sure that we pass legislation to bring about flex vehicles.

Also helping working families. It is not a question of if we will. It is we will raise the minimum wage. And that is what we are saying on this side of the aisle. There is no question about it. The minimum wage will be raised, and that is a promise. Cutting also and reversing many of the Republican majority increases on student tuition. This is a very important point and we are going to talk a little further about it because we have legislation that is filed now to reverse that, make sure that families have tax credits and make sure students don't have to pay through the nose and come out of college in debt more than they are today.

Also ensuring that seniors and individuals receive Social Security benefits, need it be survivor benefits or need it be the disabled or just simple retirement, not privatizing Social Security. The "security" part is to make sure that when all else fails that there is some level of income for those individuals who have worked their entire lives. And requiring fiscal responsibility. This is the most important, if not the point, of the Democratic agenda of making sure if we say we are going to spend it, we had better show how we are going to pay for it. Not like we are doing now, spending and borrowing from foreign nations, making this country more indebted to foreign countries than at any other time in the history of the republic.

So we will talk a little further about that and define this a little bit more as we go along.

I would like to yield to my colleague, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, and we will focus more on these issues as we go through the points again.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you, Mr. MEEK. It is a pleasure again to be here with you and spend some time talking about the priorities of the Democratic Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, I know when you were in the Chamber this afternoon you talked about what you would like the American people and the Republican Caucus, our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, would like the American people to believe. And I know it sounds good to continue to say that the Democrats do not have an agenda. Well, sadly for you, Mr. Speaker and our Republican colleagues, that is not true. Fortunately, for the American people we do have an agenda. We have had one for quite a long time. It is right here.